CULTURAL RESOURCE EVALUATION OF 633 O'NEILL AVENUE IN BELMONT, CALIFORNIA

FOR

WINDY HILL PROPERTY VENTURES
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BY

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ADMONITION

Certain information contained in this report is not intended for general public distribution. Portions of this report locate significant archaeological sites in the region of the project area, and indiscriminate distribution of these data could result in the desecration and destruction of invaluable cultural resources. In order to ensure the security of the critical data in this report, certain maps and passages may be deleted in copies not delivered directly into the hands of environmental personnel and qualified archaeologists.

THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

ABSTRACT

This cultural resource evaluation was carried out for less than one acre of land at 633 O'Neill Avenue in the City of Belmont. The archival research revealed that there are no recorded prehistoric or historic sites within the project area. However, a recent cultural resource evaluation by Archaeological Resource Management (ARM) identified a marine shell scatter within a nearby parcel at 1321 Old County Road (Cartier 2018). Two previously recorded historic resources are located within a one-eighth mile radius of the proposed project area: P-41-1878 (the Belmont Fire Station) and P-41-2361 (the Waltermire Historic District).

No significant cultural materials, prehistoric or historic, were noted during surface reconnaissance. However, surface visibility throughout the proposed project area was poor. Therefore, due to the presence of a nearby marine shell scatter and limited surface visibility, it is recommended that an archaeological auger testing program be carried out for the proposed project area to determine the presence or absence of a subsurface archaeological deposit within the proposed project area. In addition, all earthmoving activity for the proposed project should be monitored by a qualified professional archaeologist.

REQUEST FOR CULTURAL RESOURCE EVALUATION

This cultural resource evaluation was carried out to determine the presence or absence of any significant cultural resources. Cultural resource services were requested in May of 2018 in order to provide an evaluation that would investigate the possible presence of cultural resources. This report meets the requirements of CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act).

QUALIFICATIONS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Archaeological Resource Management has been specifically engaged in cultural resource management projects in central California since 1977. The firm is owned and supervised by Dr. Robert Cartier, the Principal Investigator. Dr. Cartier has a Ph.D. in anthropology, and is certified by the Register of Professional Archaeologists (RPA) for conducting cultural resource investigations as well as other specialized work in archaeology and history. He also fulfills the standards set forth by the Secretary of the Interior for inclusion as a historian and architectural historian and is certified as such on the State of California referral lists.

Dr. Cartier completed his undergraduate work in anthropology at San Jose State University and earned his M.A. and Ph.D. in anthropology from Rice University in 1975. He is certified by the Register of Professional Archaeologists (ROPA) in the categories of teaching, field work, and cultural resource management. Cartier organized the firm of Archaeological Resource Management in 1977. Since that time he has been directing archaeological and historical investigations in Santa Clara County and the central California area. The firm has completed projects for private individuals, local cities and counties, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, the State of California (CALTRANS),

and the Federal Government (Army Corps of Engineers), as well as purely academic investigations.

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE SUBJECT AREA

The subject property consists of less than an acre of land at 1301 Old County Road in the City of Belmont. On the USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle of San Mateo, the Transverse Mercator Grid (UTMG) center point for the project area is: 10S 5 64 291mE/41 52 768mN. The elevation is approximately 30 feet MSL, and the nearest source of fresh water is Belmont Creek, which runs approximately 500 feet south of proposed project area.

The proposed project consists of approximately 30 multi-family residential units. This will involve the necessary excavation, grading, trenching, and other earthmoving activities.

ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

Early ethnographic accounts of local Native American cultures provide a cultural context for archaeological studies. The Ohlone, or Costanoan, Indians inhabited the San Francisco Bay regions from the Golden Gate south to Monterey. Derived from a Spanish word, Costanoan means "people of the coast," and is an older term. Descendants of these people prefer to refer to themselves as "Ohlone," and it is now the generally accepted term. The research area is located in the Salson linguistic area, which shared many cultural traits with other linguistic groups in the Ohlone region. It is believed that the Ohlone Indians inhabited the area since A.D. 500, and that speakers of the Hokan language previously inhabited at least part of the region (Levy 1978). However, it is unclear when the Hokan or even earlier Paleo-Indians first came to the area.

The Ohlone were gatherers and hunters who utilized only the native flora and fauna with the exception of one domesticate, the dog. Yet, the abundance and high quality of natural resources allowed them to settle in semi-sedentary villages. The Ohlone were typically organized in basic political units called "tribelets" that consisted of 100 to 250 members (Kroeber 1954). The "tribelet" was an autonomous social unit consisting of one or more permanent villages with smaller villages in a relatively close proximity (Kroeber 1962). Parties went out from the major villages to locations within the tribal territory to obtain various resources.

The proximity of both mountainous and seaside and bayside areas along the peninsula made a diversity of resources available during different seasons to the native inhabitants. During the winter months, the low-lying flats near the San Francisco Bay have abundant marine and waterfowl resources, while the surrounding mountainous areas are best in the summer months for their nut, seed, and mammalian resources (King and Hickman 1973). A primary food source was acorns, abundant in autumn and easily stored for the remainder of the year. According to Gifford, the acorn industry of California was probably the most characteristic feature of its domestic economy (Gifford 1951). An elaborate process of grinding and leaching acorns is necessary to render them palatable. The acorn industry first became a major source of food in the Middle Period as is indicated by the appearance of mortars and pestles in the archaeological record (King and

Hickman 1973). Other important resources include various plant foods, land animals, and the marine resources of the San Francisco Bay. Both large and small land mammals were typically hunted, trapped or poisoned. Many items, including shell beads and ornaments, were extensively traded with other groups as far away as the Great Basin of Nevada (Davis 1974).

It is argued that contrary to usual conceptions of hunters and gatherers, native Californian groups, including the Ohlone, practiced a form of resource management that was close to agriculture. Bean and Lawton (1976) consider this pattern a "semi-agricultural" stage which included quasi-agricultural harvesting activity and proto-agricultural techniques. Some plants were pruned and reseeded seasonally for optimal production. Foods such as acorns were stored for many months at a time. Ethnographic accounts also report the repeated burning of woodlands grassbelt to increase animal and plant resources. It is likely to have made hunting conditions better by reducing scrubby growth and encouraging the growth of grasses and other plants that are appealing to grazers such as deer and elk. The plant growth succession after a burning is also rich in grains and legumes that were major food sources for Native Californians.

Bean and Lawton also claim that the abundance of plant and animal resources in California and the development of ingenious technological processes allowed Native Californians to develop social structures beyond the normal parameters of hunting and gathering. These include extensive political systems, controlled production and redistribution of goods, and alliances and trade with other groups.

There is sufficient evidence to document an established forager economic pattern within the San Francisco Bay Area beginning at 8000 cal B.C. (circa 10,000 B. P.) (Milliken et al, 2007). As an overview of the prehistory of the San Francisco Bay Area, it can be said that the first firmly recorded habitation site of the Santa Clara Valley was established approximately 6400 years B. P. (before present) at CA-SCL-64 along Alamitos Creek and Palm Canyon (Winter 1977; Cartier 1980). Few sites are known prior to the Early Period which stretched from approximately 5000 to 3000 years B.P. However, the vast majority of prehistoric sites in the San Francisco Bay Area are located along creek systems and date within the Middle Period which extended from approximately 3000 to 1000 years B.P. There were fewer sites found in the Late Period, which dated between 1000 B. P. to contact with the European explorers in the eighteenth century. This pattern is seen in the Guadalupe Corridor study, a regional study of twelve prehistoric sites located along the Guadalupe River from Blossom Hill Road northward to Highway 237 (Cartier, Bass, and Ortman 1993).

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this investigation consists of an archival search, a surface reconnaissance, an evaluation of the potential significance of the property according to the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) and the National Register of Historic Places, and a written report of the findings with appropriate recommendations. The archival research is conducted by transferring the study location to a state archaeological office which maintains all records of archaeological investigations. This

is done in order to learn if any archaeological sites or surveys have been recorded within a half mile of the subject area. Each archival search with the State is given a file number for verification. The surface reconnaissance portion of the evaluation is done to determine if traces of historic or prehistoric materials exist within the study area. This survey is conducted by a field archaeologist who examines exposed soils for cultural material. The archaeologist is looking for early ceramics, Native American cooking debris, and artifacts of stone, bone, and shell. For historic cultural resources, the field evaluation also considers older structures, distinctive architecture, and subsurface historic trash deposits of potentially significant antiquity. A report is written containing the archival information, record search number, the survey findings, and appropriate recommendations. A copy of this evaluation is sent to the State archaeological office by requirements of State procedure.

A cultural resource is considered "significant" if it qualifies as eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR). Properties that are eligible for listing in the CRHR must meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
2. Association with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;
3. Embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or representing the work of a master, or possessing high artistic values; or
4. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

Most Native American prehistoric sites are eligible due to their age, scientific potential, and/or burial remains.

The CRHR interprets the integrity of a cultural resource based upon its physical authenticity. An historic cultural resource must retain its historic character or appearance and thus be recognizable as an historic resource. Integrity is evaluated by examining the subject's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. If the subject has retained these qualities, it may be said to have integrity. It is possible that a cultural resource may not retain sufficient integrity to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places yet still be eligible for listing in the CRHR. If a cultural resource retains the potential to convey significant historical/scientific data, it may be said to retain sufficient integrity for potential listing in the CRHR.

ARCHIVAL BACKGROUND

Prior to reconnoitering the subject area, a study of the maps and records was conducted by the Northwest Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System and given the file number of NWIC#-17-2346. This research into the records at the Information Center was done to determine if any known archaeological resources

were reported in or around the subject area. The archival research revealed that there are no recorded sites, prehistoric or historic, within the project area. However, two previously recorded historic resources are located within one-eighth of a mile of the proposed project area P-41-1878 and P-41-2361. These resources are briefly described below:

P-41-1878
This historic structure is described as the Belmont Firehouse building at 875 O'Neill Avenue. This structure was originally recorded by K. Seavey in 1991, with an updated evaluation by R. Cartier in 2014. This structure is located approximately 500 feet south of the proposed project area.

P-41-2361
This resources is the Waltermire Historic District, originally recorded by K. Seavey in 1991. This district covers approximately two city blocks and included numerous examples of early 20th Century domestic architecture. This resource is located approximately 300 feet south of the proposed project area.

Four previously recorded studies have included all or a portion of the proposed project area within their scope: S-11396, S-33061, S-17993, and S-38063. These studies are briefly described below:

S-11396
This study was carried out in 1989 by Biosystems Analysis Inc. and entitled "Technical Report of Cultural Resources Studies for the Proposed WTG-WEST, Inc., Los Angeles to San Francisco and Sacramento, California: Fiber Optic Cable Project." This linear study included a narrow band of the proposed project area along Old County Road.

S-33061
Carried out by N. Sikes et al in 2006, this study is entitled "Cultural Resources Final Report of Monitoring and Findings for the Qwest Network Construction Project, State of California." This linear study included a narrow band of the proposed project area along Old County Road.

S-17993
This study was carried out in 1995 by B. Hatoff et al. It is entitled "Cultural Resources Inventory Report for the Proposed Mojave Northward Expansion Project." This linear study included a narrow band of the proposed project area along Old County Road.

S-38063
Completed by N. Kaptain in 2009, this study is entitled "Smart Corridors Geoarchaeological Sensitivity Research (letter report)." This study included the majority of the current proposed project area within its scope.

Seventeen additional previous studies have been carried out within one-eighth mile of the proposed project area.

Recent Study

A cultural resource evaluation was recently completed by ARM which identified a marine shell scatter within the nearby parcel at 1321 Old County Road. This consisted of a small area of archaeological soil containing highly fragmentary marine shell in the landscaping areas flanking the entrance to 1321 Old County Road

SURFACE RECONNAISSANCE

A "general surface reconnaissance" was conducted by a field archaeologist on all open land surfaces in the subject area. A "controlled intuitive reconnaissance" was performed in places where burrowing animals, exposed banks and inclines, and other activities had revealed subsurface stratigraphy and soil contents. The definitions of the terms "general surface reconnaissance" and "controlled intuitive reconnaissance" adopted by A.R.M. come from "The Recommended Procedures for Archaeological Impact Evaluation" compiled by Thomas F. King, Michael J. Moratto, and N. Nelson Leonard III (1976). In this document, "general surface reconnaissance" is defined as follows:

> inspection of all land surfaces that can reasonably be expected to contain visible archaeological resources. Every portion of the study area whose surface can be seen without major modification of the vegetation or structural cover, and where it is reasonably possible that human activities that would leave traces might be carried out, is inspected in a general surface reconnaissance. Every foot of ground is not necessarily covered. A general surface reconnaissance is the functional equivalent of a complete reconnaissance . . . in areas where soil, vegetation, or other conditions make it highly unlikely that some kinds of archaeological phenomena would be preserved, or where surface conditions obscure such phenomena to a point at which they could not be observed without undertaking large-scale brush clearing, grading, etc. (1976).

Additionally in this document, "controlled intuitive reconnaissance" is defined as follows:

> "spot check" of areas known to be "likely" ones for archaeological resources based on intimate familiarity with local settlement patterns (1976).

The boundaries of the proposed project area were well established in the field by existing streets and detailed project maps. Accessibility was good to fair; portions of the subject area were inaccessible due to fencing. Soil visibility was poor; approximately 90% of the surface area was obscured by the existing structure on the property as well as the parking lot and other hardtop surfaces. Vegetation on the property consisted of commercial landscaping, trees and some weeds. Where native soils were exposed, a light to medium brown silty loam was observed in most areas. Rock types noted on the property consisted

of small amounts of native metamorphic gravel, as well as imported gravel. No significant cultural materials, prehistoric or historic, were noted during surface reconnaissance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The archival research revealed that there are no recorded prehistoric or historic sites within the project area. However, a recent cultural resource evaluation by Archaeological Resource Management (ARM) identified a marine shell scatter within a nearby parcel at 1321 Old County Road (Cartier 2018). Two previously recorded historic resources are located within a one-eighth mile radius of the proposed project area: P-41-1878 (the Belmont Fire Station) and P-41-2361 (the Waltermire Historic District).

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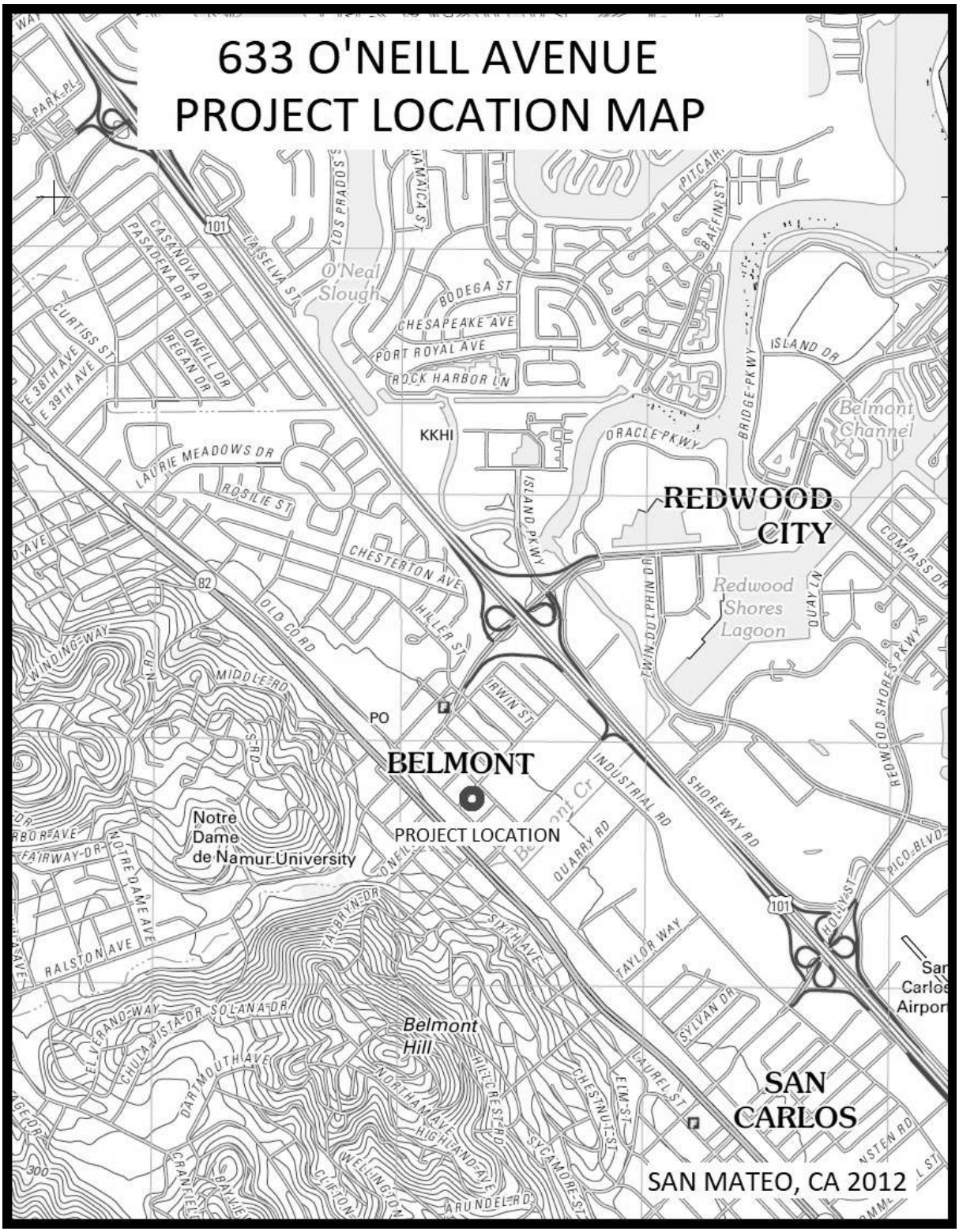
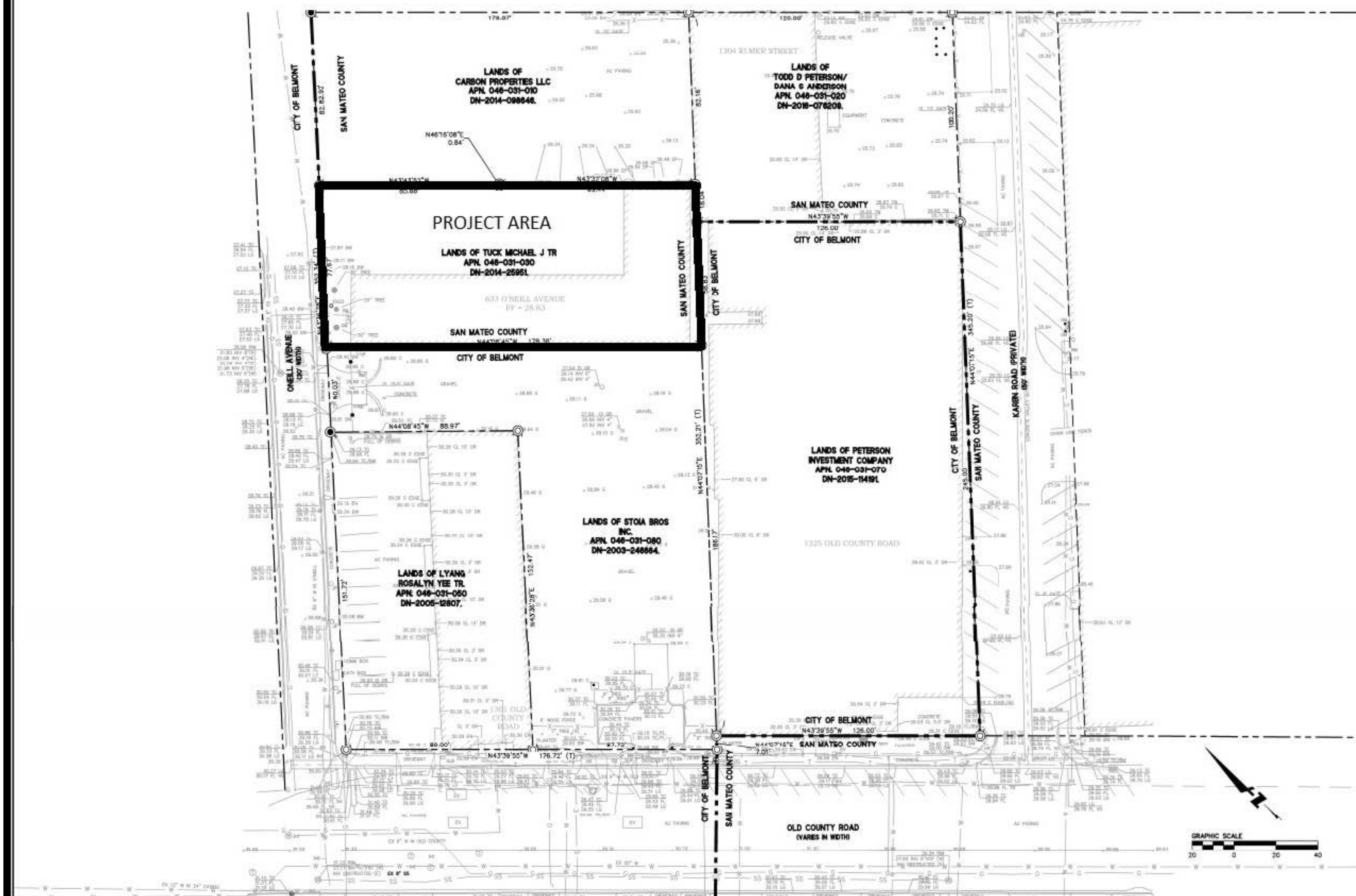
633 O'NEILL AVENUE
PROJECT LOCATION MAP



SAN MATEO, CA 2012

633 O'NEILL AVENUE PROJECT AREA MAP



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1325 OLD COUNTY ROAD
VESTING TENTATIVE MAP
EXISTING CONDITIONS

CITY OF BELMONT — SAN MATEO COUNTY — CALIFORNIA

Date 10/12/17
Scale AS SHOWN
Design SGM
Drawn AMJ
Approved MAO
Job No 20160331

Drawing Number:
C2.02
3 of 12

VESTING TENTATIVE MAP SUBMITTAL #1